

THE  
TRIUMPH of DEATH.  
A P O E M.

In MEMORY of  
The RIGHT HONOURABLE  
*HENRY PELHAM.*

IMITATED from PETRARCH.

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----- *Quantum instar in ipso est !*

*Sed nox atra caput tristi circumvolat umbra.* VIR.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for R. and J. DODSLEY, in *Pall-mall*; and sold by  
M. COOPER, at the Globe in *Pater-noster-Row*. 1754.

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# TRIUMPH of DEATH.

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**W**HY flow these sighs, why starts the sudden tear,  
And whence that groan, as Nature's self was sick?  
O! these are bodings of substantial ill;  
Has life no blessing unallay'd with care?  
Thus mus'd a youth, to musing much inclin'd,  
All as he stray'd in Capel's flow'ry vale;  
When lo! before him spread, by pow'r unseen,  
A fair extended plain, the field of life,  
To which one only, painful entrance led;  
But from it thousand ways; for in that plain

Pitfalls

Pitfalls and gins concealed lay, and pale  
 Diseases lurk'd in brake and bushy dell,  
 That seiz'd unwary passengers, and some  
 At entrance stop'd; oft from the mother's breast  
 Snatch'd the dear pledge of her domestic joys,  
 Or the sweet virgin ere her bridal morn  
 From the fond wishes of the love-sick youth;  
 Some in their strength exulting, fresh in life,  
 That seem'd to grasp eternity in thought,  
 Down drop'd convuls'd, to rise no more; while some  
 By pining Atrophy consum'd, like fate  
 Implor'd, and call'd with ghastly eyes in vain  
 On Death, who ruthless pass'd the wretched by;  
 A few, that travell'd far beyond the rest  
 Bow-bent with age, and with their journey tir'd,  
 Shrivell'd and shrunk, like leaves autumnal fell  
 By frosts annoy'd. Amid the thousands there  
 On various tasks intent, for various tasks  
 Employ'd the thousands there; one happy man  
 I mark'd, of graceful port, and manners plain;



No princely diadem invests his brow,  
 Nor purple shades his heels ; yet such his train  
 As might adorn the greatest monarch's court,  
 For well they grac'd the monarch's whom he serv'd ;  
 With ken more piercing than the lynx's beam  
 Sage Foresight led the way, preventing ills ;  
 With Foresight walk'd Sagacity, a leech  
 Of ready art, that could to sudden ills  
 As sudden cures apply ; upon his left  
 The rights of mankind in her equal scale  
 Fair Justice weigh'd ; while Temp'rance on his right  
 Turn'd pleasures, passions, appetites aside,  
 That else had crowded, on th' impartial beam  
 To hang their claims : behind, with step untir'd  
 Walk'd patient Industry, fore labour's drop  
 Fast trickling from his brow : such was his train,  
 In number few, for true nobility  
 Is rare ; yet singly each deserving seem'd  
 The brightest poet's or historian's pen ;  
 Clear stars they seem'd, and in the midst their sun

That

That not obscur'd, but more illumin'd them :  
 With these, unruffled o'er the plain he mov'd,  
 And aye the virtuous bless'd him as he pass'd ;  
 For, ever studious of the gen'ral weal,  
 Ne'er was he known to grudge the toil-tir'd hind  
 His healthful viands and refreshing ease ;  
 But free as Nature's elements his soul,  
 As Autumn bounteous, and as Summer sweet,  
 And ever he would plant with laurels fair  
 The fields, beneath whose shade the peasant slept  
 Unharm'd, the milkmaid danc'd, and shepherd sung  
 Secure : before him Faction fled apace,  
 And Clamour died ; for well he knew to build  
 The lofty argument, and point the springs  
 Whence Discontents and foul-mouth'd Rancours rose,  
 Or strip the gilding Art on Falshood spreads ;  
 Thence never but i'th' night Sedition walk'd,  
 And pale-ey'd Envy which the best things mars  
 By silence own'd, no ill possess'd his heart.  
 Now more than midway of the field he gain'd,  
 When under ensign dark and drear was seen



A spectre sable-cloak'd, darts form'd his crown,  
 And Ruin mark'd his eye; with fury more,  
 Than did \* Aloius' sons to scale the wall  
 Of heav'n, he mov'd and said, Great fire renown'd  
 In Honour's volume, in the Patriot's page,  
 Who not the bounds of this existence see,  
 I'm he, inexorable call'd and fierce  
 By men of fordid cares, whom vain pursuits  
 Deceive, whose night before their evening comes,  
 And who alive are dead; I to their end  
 Have led the Græcian, Trojan, Roman race,  
 And nations barbarous with this fell sword  
 Laid waste, and oft with unexpected blow  
 Dash'd the proud schemes Ambition idly plan'd:  
 To thee, whose well-earn'd honours on thy brow  
 Bloom eminent, I now direct my course,  
 Ere with her bitters Fortune mix thy sweet,—  
 No pow'r o'er these my train, little o'er me  
 Thou hast, replied th' undaunted man, these limbs  
 Alone thy spoil; but say, officious king,

If

\* The two sons of Aloius attempted to dethrone Jove.

If thou canst look into the book of Time  
 And read the great events recorded there,  
 Say, shall my country need my feeble aid?  
 If not, lead on:—The fiend with frowning turbid brow,  
 Not mine to know, what shall be, but destroy  
 What is; if then my counsel thou wilt hear,  
 Who else come arm'd to force my fix'd decrees,  
 Better it is to fly old age, and all  
 Its tedious irksomeness of life, I come  
 To favour thee, to do thee honour more  
 Than I am wont, to take thee timely hence,  
 Ere the ripe glories wither on thy brow.

As it shall please the Pow'r who thron'd in heav'n  
 From thence his realm, this universe, directs,  
 Be it with me, as with his works, mankind,  
 He answer'd; when athwart his eye appear'd  
 An ample vale abounding with more dead  
 Than prose or poet's song can comprehend,  
 More countless than the swarms that darken'd Nile  
 Call'd by the pow'rful rod of \* Amram's son,



Or hail that rattles on Norwegian hills  
 When low'ring clouds come freighted from the North;  
 Unnumber'd millions, that for ages past  
 Had fill'd the vallies and the mountains round  
 Here those whom erring mortals happy stile;  
 Pontiffs, and emperors, and scepter'd chiefs,  
 Forsaken, naked, poor, and beggars now:  
 Where are their gems, their sweeping purple where,  
 Their mitres, riches, honours, sceptres, crowns?  
 Unthinking wretches, who on earth build hope!  
 Yet who on mortal things has not built hope?  
 Full meet it is, since men deceive themselves;  
 They should at disappointments pine and grieve:  
 Blind men, that spend in idle care their day,  
 Yet to their native mother clay return'd  
 Hardly their names are found; from all their toil  
 Only this profitable lore they gain,  
 That thoughtless man's by Vanity misled:  
 Of what avail to lay with hostile sword  
 Whole kingdoms waste, to lord o'er prostrate states?  
 Care ever treads on mad Ambition's heel.

After great enterprizes stained with blood,  
Treasure and kingdoms by injustice won;  
Bread, water, wood, the meanest peasant's lot,  
More joys afford than coronets and gold.

But fit, I now should leave this argument,  
And back to my first mournful labour turn.  
The solemn hour arriv'd, the last of life,  
That doubtful step from which the brave man shrinks:  
The weeping consort, and the pious child,  
With his Achates who had shar'd his heart,  
And well deserv'd, for he had shar'd his toils,  
Stood round his couch, true images of grief,  
Deriving comfort only from despair:  
Serene alone amidst their sighs he sat  
And reap'd the harvest of a life well-spent:  
Then from his head Death cut the fatal lock,  
And of its brightest glory spoil'd the world.  
Tell ye who saw, for ye alone can tell,  
What floods of streaming sorrow bath'd the earth:  
That day, with clouds the sun obscur'd his face,  
But thro' those clouds wept bitter show'rs of tears;



Silent the Muses sate, with folded arms,  
 Nor touch'd their harps; yet ever and anon  
 A groan burst forth, and from the sympathizing chords  
 Wak'd tones that struck the vales beneath with woe;  
 No shepherd pip'd, but mute and rueful sad  
 Forgot his flocks, his flocks forgot themselves;  
 No voice was heard, save the lone bird's, that now  
 Plain'd sadliest, and the widow'd turtle's moan  
 Responsive to his widow's groans, who wail'd  
 Her hapless fate, for ever thence condemn'd  
 To measure day by sighs, and night by tears:  
 But oh! what verse may paint his Prince's heart,  
 As down his cheek the graceful anguish flow'd!  
 Astonied Nature seem'd, and pain'd with grief;  
 At length a swain unable to suppress  
 Up snatch'd his reed, and gave his sorrow voice;

Truth, Honour, Courtesy are fled,  
 Pelham the pride of Albion's dead;  
 Nor Faith, nor Piety could save,  
 Nor sacred Justice, from the grave:

Who

Who now will deeds behold so near  
 Divine, or who the language hear  
 Of Wisdom's honey-dropping tongue,  
 More sweet than Philomela's song?  
 The soul, that to the realms of rest  
 So lately fled that honest breast,  
 With all its virtues, heav'n-born train,  
 Now glads again the heav'nly plain:  
 Down as if tir'd he seem'd to lye,  
 As sleep steals on the fading eye,  
 So stole from him the fleeting breath,  
 Which we mistaken men call death;  
 Bring, swains, the flow'rs that early grow,  
 The primrose pale and vi'let strew,  
 Pay ev'ry honour to that Name  
 Which Virtue registers with Fame.  
 Thus sung the humblest of the Muses' train,  
 That had not dar'd to join that sacred throng,  
 But that his subject dignified his verse.

11:7:49

T H E E N D.